

Mr. Chairman, I rise in strong support of H.R. 1867, the National Science Foundation Reauthorization Act of 2007.

I really want to thank Chairman Gordon, Chairman Baird and Ranking Member Ehlers for their work on this bill. Under their leadership, our committee has produced a remarkable amount of quality legislation, including this bill before the House tonight.

Our country's global competitiveness is directly linked to the ability of our math, science and engineering professionals to develop innovative technologies, policies and scientific breakthroughs.

Yet while it is important to support these professionals and their industries today, it is perhaps of even greater importance to support their professions and industries of tomorrow.

In order for our Nation to compete with countries around the world, we must ensure that we increase the educational opportunities for our youth to study and pursue careers in math, science and engineering, while also investing in programs to enrich the quality of these opportunities.

Making both research and the education of our children a national priority is not simply an investment in these fields. Our global competitiveness is directly tied to our Nation's economy and national security.

NSF plays a critical role in influencing our global competitiveness as it supports science and engineering across all disciplines.

Each year NSF supports an average of about 200,000 scientists, engineers, educators and students at universities, laboratories and field sites all over the U.S., including many great institutions in my home State of Missouri.

H.R. 1867 authorizes the necessary funds for NSF which will allow the agency to foster relationships between academia and industry in order to spawn U.S. competitiveness and further the Agency's traditions of education in science, technology, engineering and math, the STEM, fields.

I urge my colleagues to invest in the future of our children, in our country's global competitiveness and support this bill.